

Empowering the Practice of Psychology in the Field of Health Promotion

Kristensen, Kasper Andreas

Publication date:
2011

Document Version
Peer reviewed version

Citation for published version (APA):
Kristensen, K. A. (2011). *Empowering the Practice of Psychology in the Field of Health Promotion*. Abstract from 14th Biennial Conference of the International Society for Theoretical Psychology, Thessaloniki, Greece.

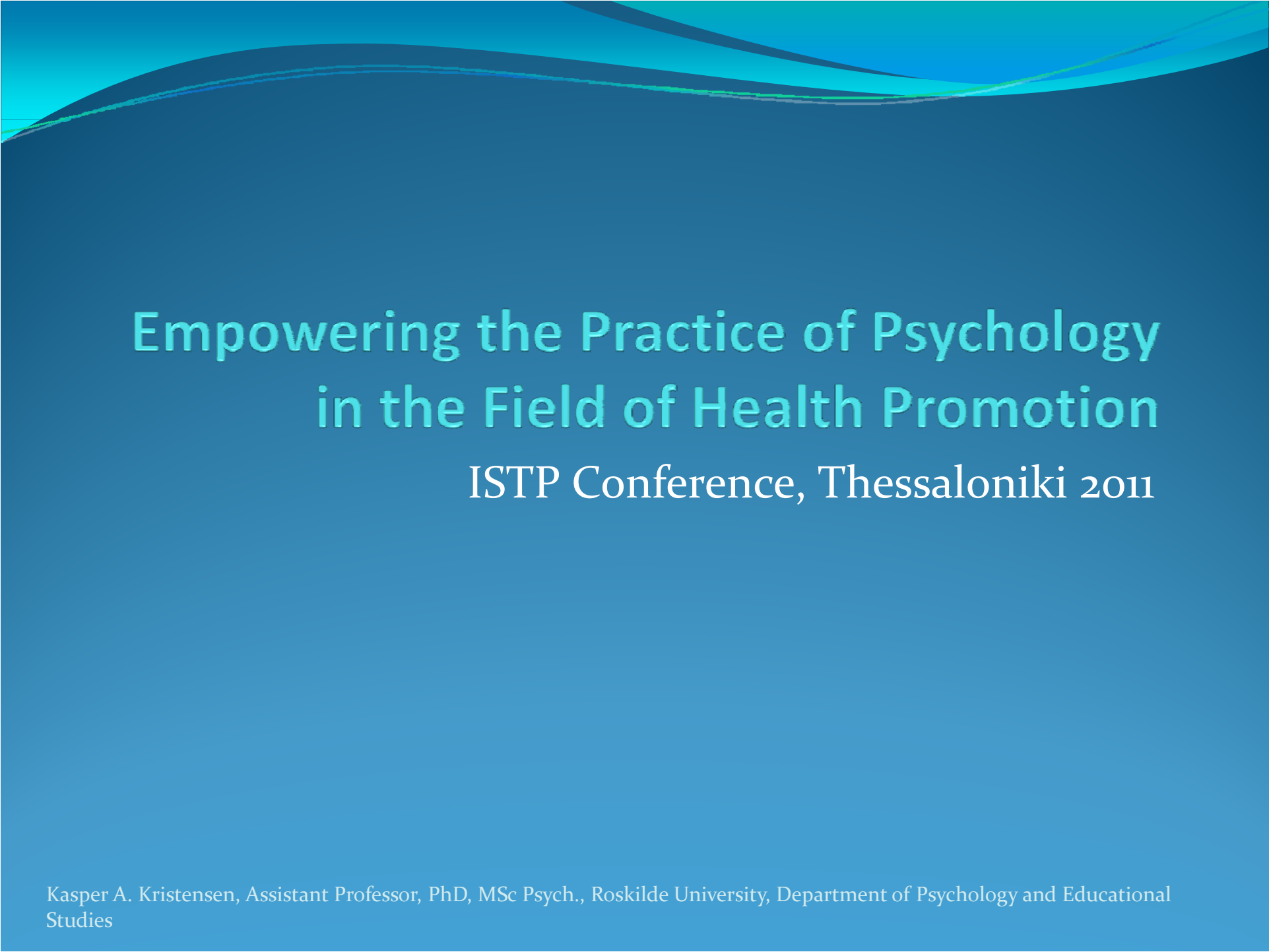
General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain.
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal.

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact rucforsk@kb.dk providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

The background of the slide is a solid blue color. At the top, there are several wavy, horizontal lines in shades of blue and teal, creating a sense of movement and depth. The main title is centered in the upper half of the slide.

Empowering the Practice of Psychology in the Field of Health Promotion

ISTP Conference, Thessaloniki 2011

Kasper A. Kristensen, Assistant Professor, PhD, MSc Psych., Roskilde University, Department of Psychology and Educational Studies



Problematic

HEALTH PROMOTION

EMPOWERMENT

COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL THEORIES?

CRITICAL PSYCHOLOGY

LIFE CONDUCT

LIFE STYLE

The new and unsettled field of health promotion

- Changed demographics
- Increased prosperity
- Welfare
- Changing civil demands
- New technologies

HEALTH PROMOTION

Problem of theory

**MEDICAL
SERVICES**




Timeline

- 1946: WHO: Health as a positive concept
“Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”
- Antonovsky (1979; 1987): salutogenesis, coping
- 1986: The Ottawa Charter on Health Promotion
- Green & Tones (2009): Health promotion as a discipline



Ottawa charter on health

“To reach a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, an individual or group *must be able to identify and to realize aspirations, to satisfy needs, and to change or cope with the environment.* Health is, therefore, seen as a resource for everyday life, not the objective of living. Health is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities. Therefore, health promotion is not just the responsibility of the health sector, but goes beyond healthy life-styles to well-being.” (WHO, Ottawa Charter, 1986)

- 
- A holistic health concept
 - peace, housing, food, employment, education, health care access, civil rights
 - Health - relational thinking of an subject and a social environment
 - Action theory of health (Nordenfelt, Wackerhausen, Whitbeck, Pörn)
 - ”The subjects capacity and resources to realize vital goals”
 - -> The power to produce the ”good life”



Empowerment

- “Health promotion is the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health.”
- Empowerment (Freire, Pedagogy of the oppressed, 1972)
- Expansive community empowerment



Health promotion as political ideology

- Political Ideology (Green & Tones, 2009):
 - Health as human rights
 - Equity
 - Individual, group and cultural autonomy
 - **Participation**
 - **Partnership**
 - **Enablement**
 - **Advocacy**
 - **Facilitation**

Psychological theory in health promotion

- Cognitive behavioral theories
- The Health Belief Model
- Health Act Model (Green)
- The transtheoretical model (Prochaska &)
- Social Cognitive Behaviour theory (Bandura)
- (- Positive Psychology?)

Dis-empowerment theories?

- Behavior
- Only vaguely contextualized and situated
- Individualistic
- Expert perspective
- Change of predetermined behaviours
- Motivation work
- Empowering as increased self regulation

Critical Psychology as an empowerment psychology?

- Berlin-Copenhagen school of critical psychology (Holzkamp, 1983; Dreier, 1993)
- From Cultural Historical Activity theory
- A psychology from the subjects standpoint
- Activity theory
- Participation - in social structures of practice (Dreier, 1999)



Empowerment theory?

- Co-research, practice research, action research
- Critical-constructive
- AIM: To increase the subjects influence and command of the social production of relevant living conditions
- Psychosocial understandings of psychological distress



'the conduct of life'

- Problem: researching understandings of health in the subjects settings, environments and practices of everyday life?
- The daily conduct of life (Holzkamp, forthcoming; 1998; Dreier, 2009)
- The continuous structuring of practices, social tasks, relations and life conditions in the subjects embodied processual and social activities and life experiences
- The production of a "good life"

A discussion of the concept of '*life style*' in health promotion

- Life style (Weber, Cockerham, Rütten & Abel, 1995)
- Life style related diseases
- Lifestyle as an emergent but underconceptualized concept in socialmedical research and theory, (Coreil, Levin & Jaco, 1985)
- Stable patterns of behaviour, consumption, cognitions, social beliefs
- Individual choices, habits
- Constrained by "life chances", class, culture, habitus



Life style and lebensführung

- Weber triadic concepts (Cockerham, Rütten & Abel, 1995):
 - Lifestyle
 - Life chances
 - ---
 - Life conduct (choices, self direction)



Comparative discussion

Life style

- A game of categorization and typification:
"affluent achievers", "settled suburbans" etc.
- Consumption, leisure and risk behaviors

Life conduct

- Overlooks socially and historical situated particularities, dynamics and complexities of life conduct through extreme generalization
- Productive, structuring activities



Comparative discussion

Life style

- Assumption of stable homogenous patterns of habits and styles of consumption
- Sociocultural patterns and meanings

Life conduct

- Focus on changes, transitions, conflicts, projects , balances
- The handling of cultural complexities and diversity



Comparative discussion

Life style

- Status, safety
- Identity (Giddens)

Life conduct

- Enable struggles, projects
different reasons, goals,
- Coming to an understanding
with yourself and others
(Holzkamp, 1998)



Questions and concerns

- A prospective field for critical psychologies?
- Will psychology continue to be a reactionary force in this field?
- Coaching approaches and the commercialization of the health market?